Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

dividing target devices to which a message is targeted into subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device and a number of subsets to which the target devices are divided;

communicating a second message to at least one of the respective subsets of targeted devices; and

varying a timing with which the second message is communicated to the respective subsets of target devices.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein determining the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted comprises:

broadcasting the message over a network;

receiving one or more responses to the message from target devices coupled to the network;

estimating a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim I wherein determining the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted comprises:

multicasting the message to a subset of a network;

receiving one or more responses to the message from target devices of the subnet;

estimating a number of devices in the subnet; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

4. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a machine-accessible medium to provide machine-readable instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic system to:

divide target devices to which a message is targeted into subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device and a number of subsets to which the target devices are divided;

communicate a second message to at least one of the respective subsets of targeted devices; and

vary a timing with which the second message is communicated to the respective subsets of target devices.

5. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 4 wherein the instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast the message over a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

6. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 4 wherein the instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast the message to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

7. (Currently Amended) An electronic data signal embodied in a data

communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

divide target devices to which a message is targeted into subsets of target devices, wherein a subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device and a number of subsets to which the target devices are divided;

communicate a second message to at least one of the respective subsets of targeted devices; and

vary a timing with which the second message is communicated to the respective subsets of target devices.

8. (Previously Presented) The electronic data signal of claim 7 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast the message over a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

9. (Previously Presented) The electronic data signal of claim 7 wherein the

sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast the message to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

10. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

dividing a set of target devices to which a message is targeted into multiple subsets of target devices, wherein the subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device;

communicating a second message to at least one of the respective subsets of targeted devices; and

varying a timing with which the respective subsets of devices respond to the first message.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein determining the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted comprises:

broadcasting the message over a network;

receiving one or more responses to the message from target devices coupled to

the network;

estimating a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein determining the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted comprises:

multicasting the message to a subset of a network;

receiving one or more responses to the message from target devices of the subnet;

estimating a number of devices in the subnet; and

determining a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

13. (Currently Amended) An article comprising a machine-accessible medium to provide machine-readable instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic system to:

divide a set of target devices to which a message is targeted into multiple subsets of target devices, wherein the subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device; ~~and~~

vary a timing with which the respective subsets of devices respond to the first message; and~~.~~

communicate a second message to at least one of the respective subsets of targeted devices.

14. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 13 wherein the instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to detennine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast the message over a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

15. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 13 wherein the instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to detennine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast the message to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number

of devices in the subnet.

16. (Currently Amended) An electronic data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

divide a set of target devices to which a message is targeted into multiple subsets of target devices, wherein the subset to which a particular device belongs is determined based on an identifier of the device; ~~and~~

vary a timing with which the respective subsets of devices respond to the first message; and

communicate a second message to the respective subsets of targeted devices.

17. (Previously Presented) The electronic data signal of claim 16 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

broadcast the message over a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices coupled to the network;

estimate a number of devices coupled to the network; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices coupled to the network.

18. (Previously Presented) The electronic data signal of claim 16 wherein the sequences of instructions that cause the one or more electronic systems to determine the subset of target devices to which the message is targeted further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more electronic systems to:

multicast the message to a subset of a network;

receive one or more responses to the message from target devices of the subnet;

estimate a number of devices in the subnet; and

determine a number of subgroups based, at least in part, on the estimated number of devices in the subnet.

19. (Withdrawn) A method comprising:

receiving a message via a network, the network coupled to a group of devices, the message having a bins value indicating a number of subgroups to divide the network devices into and a hash value indicating a specific subgroup of the number of subgroups to which the message is targeted;

performing a hashing function with a unique identifier and the bins value to generate a hash result; and

responding to the message if the hash result equals the hash value.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19 wherein the message is a discovery request message.

21. (Withdrawn) An article comprising a machine-accessible medium to provide machine-readable instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

receive a message via a network, the network coupled to a group of devices, the message having a bins value indicating a number of subgroups to divide the network devices into and a hash value indicating a specific subgroup of the number of subgroups to which the message is targeted;

perform a hashing function with a unique identifier and the bins value to generate a hash result; and

respond to the message if the hash result equals the hash value.

22. (Withdrawn) The article of claim 21 wherein the message is a discovery request message.

23. (Withdrawn) An electronic data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices comprising sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause one or more electronic systems to:

receive a message via a network, the network coupled to a group of devices, the message having a bins value indicating a number of subgroups to divide the network devices into and a hash value indicating a specific subgroup of the number of subgroups to which the message is targeted;

perform a hashing function with a unique identifier and the bins value to generate

a hash result; and

respond to the message if the hash result equals the hash value.

24. (Withdrawn) The electronic data signal of claim 23 wherein the message is a discovery request message.